

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

4-24-2019

Gardner-Webb's Alpha Chi Members Win National Awards for Research

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Gardner-Webb's Alpha Chi Members Win National Awards for Research

webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gardner-webbs-alpha-chi-members-win-national-awards-for-research/

Office of University
Communications

April 24, 2019

Students Receive Top Prizes in Several Areas, Including Best Alumni Presentation



BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—During March Madness, Gardner-Webb University gained national attention for the men's basketball team's first appearance in the NCAA tournament. The winning season continues for GWU, this time with a focus on scholarship. Recently, the elite academic team from Alpha Chi competed and networked in Cleveland, Ohio, at the honor society's national convention.

"All ten students who competed were polished and professional," stated Dr. June Hobbs, Alpha Chi sponsor and GWU professor of English and director of Undergraduate Research. "Assistant sponsor, Dr. Bruce Moser, was invaluable in bringing all of this to pass. Although most of the conference is about inherent educational value, we also have some wins to share."

Bethany Leap, of Sarasota, Fla., a senior global studies major, won a Region III graduate fellowship and position of first alternate for the national Benedict graduate fellowship for her essay "Ticking Time Bombs: The Effects of Indiscriminate Violence on Civil War Outcomes." Her mentor was Dr. Casey Delehanty.

Olivia Simmons, of Advance, N.C., a junior biology major with a biomedical sciences concentration, won a national Nolle Scholarship for her essay “Disney Movies and Children’s Perceptions of Death.” Her mentor was Hobbs.

Madeline Bame, of Gastonia, N.C., a sophomore music education major, won a presentation prize for the best paper in the Educational Research/Scholarship category for “An Examination of the Relationships between Music Education and Graduation Rates in Title I Schools in North Carolina.” Dr. Morgan Soja was her mentor.



James Withrow, who competed as a GWU alum, won the best graduate school/alumni presentation prize for “Cryptic ‘Royal’ Subfamilies in Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) Colonies.” Withrow, who graduated from Gardner-Webb in 2012 with degrees in music and biology, is a PhD candidate at North Carolina State University (Raleigh, N.C.)

Taylor Hildebrand, of Connelly Springs, N.C., a junior middle grades mathematics education major, won a seat on the National Council, the governing body of national Alpha Chi, as a student representative from Region III. This is a significant honor, because Hildebrand will help shape policy and programs for the next two years.

In addition, Hildebrand was a member of a team that presented a sophisticated collaborative research project on the polarizing effects of gender in the workplace. Other team members were:

- Morgan VanderSchaaf, of Jenison, Mich., a senior nursing major.
- Callista Eckert, of Newnan, Ga., a senior English and pre-med major.

- Kristen Wong, of Richmond Hill, Ontario, a senior biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences.
- Hope Miller, of Harrisburg, N.C., a senior nursing major.
- Celsea Reeder, of Salisbury, N.C., a biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences and double minor in chemistry and Spanish.

Sydney Hardin, of Shelby, N.C., a senior music education major, gave a presentation on “Hildegard von Bingen: Transcending a Woman’s Status in Medieval Europe,” and Damian Hutchins, of Cherryville, N.C., a senior biology major with a concentration in biomedical sciences, presented a paper titled, “Growth Hormone’s Cognitive Effect on the Human Body.” Eckert gave an individual paper titled, “Folklore: Alive and Well in Catholic Ireland.”

VanderSchaaf, who also serves as GWU chapter president, presented her individual research, “Triad of Anxiety: A Qualitative Analysis of Anxiety in Collegiate Athletes in Nursing Programs,” and was part of a team that exemplified the Alpha Chi motto, “making scholarship effective for good,” by visiting Paul L. Dunbar Academy in Cleveland to read to children in the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program. National Alpha Chi’s service project was a partnership with RIF to promote children’s literacy. Through these efforts, Alpha Chi raised over \$2,000 and donated 120 books.

Follow Alpha Chi on Facebook (Alpha Chi at Gardner-Webb) and Instagram (gwualphachi).

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university, Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.